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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 001279

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SUBJECT: PAKISTANI PRESSURE ON IRAN

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) President Musharraf, Foreign Minister Kasuri, and Foreign Secretary Khan have all recently emphasized to Ambassador that one purpose of Pakistan's "Moderate Muslim States" initiative is to pressure Iran to modify its behavior. Pakistan believes that by not inviting Iran to the February 24 meeting of Muslim Foreign Ministers in Islamabad, the other participants (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Indonesia and Malaysia) have made clear that Tehran must moderate its policies on nuclear development and foreign relations and that it should adopt the Beirut Declaration on the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Foreign Minister Kasuri says he has told Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki that Iran must change its unrealistic and destabilizing stances toward Israel, the U.S., and nuclear issues. Kasuri reports that Iran is flexible on some issues, "but it absolutely will not break ranks on nuclear enrichment."

¶2. (C) President Musharraf visited Tehran in February as part of his outreach to Muslim nations. According to Khan, Musharraf met with Ahmedinejad to explain the broad parameters of his initiative and to "clearly convey concerns that Iranian confrontation (with the U.S. and the West) must be prevented." Ahmedinejad responded that Iran was not responsible for tensions. He also denied Iran was supporting sectarianism in Iraq.

¶3. (C) Musharraf told the Ambassador that, in a phone conversation following the Islamabad Ministerial, Ahmedinejad expressed unhappiness over Iran's exclusion. Musharraf said he responded that a common point of departure for the seven participating states was the 2002 Beirut Summit Declaration on a two state solution to the Palestinian issue, which Iran rejects. He said he urged Ahmedinejad to reconsider Iran's position. Kasuri told the Ambassador separately that the Pakistani Ambassador in Tehran was called in to receive a complaint about the ministerial. The Iranian Ambassador in Islamabad delivered the same complaint. Kasuri said the Ambassadors received the same reply as Musharraf gave Ahmedinejad.

¶4. (C) Foreign Minister Kasuri and Foreign Secretary Khan recently told Ambassador that Pakistan's initiative was probably one motivator spurring Iran to visit Saudi Arabia in early March. (Comment: The connection between the Musharraf initiative and the Ahmedinejad trip to Mecca could take two

forms: The Iranian President may have wanted to convince the Saudis not to cooperate with the Pakistanis; or he may have been trying to prove that he is not averse to dialogue. End Comment.)

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Aman 07: Another Message  
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15. (C) Pakistani leaders have intimated that one purpose of the recent Aman 07 Naval Exercise was to demonstrate to Iran that the U.S., Pakistan, China, and other countries are able to cooperate militarily. Mission's Defense Attache's Office and the Office of Defense Representative - Pakistan have confirmed that Iran did not/not participate as observers in Aman '07 and that reporting in other channels claiming that Pakistan invited Iran to observe the exercise is inaccurate.

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Moderate Muslim States Initiative: Its Genesis  
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16. (C) In a March 16 meeting, Foreign Secretary Khan explained to Ambassador the roots of Musharraf's initiative. He said that various recent visitors to Islamabad, including the King of Jordan, had told Musharraf that like-minded nations should find a way to combat the deteriorating situation in the Middle East. Khan reported that naysayers, particularly in the Foreign Ministry, warned the President against involving Pakistan in the labyrinth of Middle East problems. Musharraf countered doubters by asking them four questions:

--Is the situation in the Middle East not deteriorating?

ISLAMABAD 00001279 002 OF 002

--Is Pakistan not involved or effected?

--If the situation implodes -- e.g. in Iran -- would it not have disastrous consequences on Pakistan?

--So should we stand still with folded hands?

17. (C) According to Khan, Musharraf began his initiative by contacting Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. (Note: Pakistan ultimately excluded Syria from the February Foreign Ministers' meeting because Syria was not adequately committed to playing a helpful role in the Middle East. End Note.) The original countries agreed on broad parameters on two main issues: the need for a specific timeline for the establishment of a Palestinian state; and the need to play a constructive role in tamping down sectarian tensions in Iraq.

18. (C) Khan said that, at the February 24 meeting of Foreign Ministers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Indonesia and Malaysia, countries were reluctant to "push Iran" and Arab representatives seemed uncomfortable over non-Arab countries involving themselves in Middle East issues. Musharraf responded that, if Muslim countries were serious about resolving Iraq and the Palestinian question, participants should put their reservations aside. Ultimately, all seven Foreign Ministers issued a joint statement viewing "with deep distress the conflict in Iraq," worrying that sectarian tensions would spill across Iraq's borders, and decrying a "festering" Palestinian dispute, violence in Lebanon, and rising tensions over Iran's nuclear program. (Ref A).

19. (C) Comment: In two important ways, Musharraf's moderate Muslim states initiative has already been a success.

It has brought together key foreign ministers, including those from Saudi Arabia and Egypt, on relatively short notice; and it has made Iran uncomfortable. Musharraf's initiative creates an interesting, unplanned synergy with the UNSC resolution and the Iraq neighboring states initiative. The three actions together provide both incentives and negative consequences to encourage Iran to moderate its behavior.

